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(DRAFT)

CSI 1997-444
25 September 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR: Thomas Pallas, DO/LA
Fred Wickham, DO/IMS

FROM: John F. Pereira
Chief, CSI/HRG

SUBJECT: Priority Request from Chairman,
JFK Assassination Records Board

1. (S) The purpose of this memorandum is to advise you of a priority request from the Chairman of the JFK Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB). The request concerns records related to Lee Harvey Oswald that may be held by the Mexican Government.

2. (S) At his initiative, I met recently with the ARRB Chairman, Judge John Tunheim. He said the reason for the meeting was to ask that CIA assist the Board by making inquiries to liaison to determine if the Mexican Government has certain records related to Oswald's activities in Mexico in late 1963. Of particular interest to the Board is whether the Mexicans have copies of tapes from joint tel-tap operations, including coverage of Oswald's telephone calls to the Soviet Embassy. He said that locating such records is "the highest priority of the Board." (The attached letter from the ARRB's General Counsel explains the Board's interest.)

3. (S) Earlier this year, the Board sought unsuccessfully to obtain information about Oswald from the Mexican Government via the State Department. (See attached cable.) Mexico responded by providing copies of the same material that had been made available to the Warren Commission in 1964. The problem for the Board was that, in making the request to Mexico, it did not want to reveal information about tightly-held joint operations that the Board knew of from CIA records. Being sensitive to the Agency's request to protect this information, Tunheim would like the Agency to contact Mexican liaison directly on the Board's behalf.

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4. (FOUO) During the meeting with Tunheim, I said that we would discuss his request with the appropriate people in the Agency. In view of the priority that Tunheim places on this matter, I recommend that our JFK Project Leader (Barry Harrelson) and I meet with you or other appropriate DO representatives soon to discuss possible options for responding to the request.

John Pereira

Attachments

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